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Resident near C&D awaits test results

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A Foster Township woman will have to wait for results of a sample taken on her home's water supply by officials involved with the Remedial Investigation Feasibility Study of the C&D Recycling plant.

But in the meantime Jane Sulima, who owns a home just down the road from the Superfund site, is wondering why the pH reading taken Monday on her water is so low.

Officials from Fred C. Hart Associates, a New York firm involved with the RIFS at the plant; along with a representative from the federal Environmental Protection Agency, came to Mrs. Sulima's home yesterday to perform several tests on her well water.

While some of the samples taken will be tested for various elements by Compu Chem Laboratories, a North Carolina outfit Hart is using for the tests, Mrs. Sulima was able to see other test results that surprised her.

"We never had readings this low," she said after water samples were tested repeatedly by Hart's Donald C. Anne. "Something is coming through the groundwater and causing it to be acidic."

Monday's tests yielded a pH reading, which measures whether a substance is more acid or alkaline, of 4.2. The normal

reading for her water, according to Mrs. Sulima, is between 8.5 and 9.

That means that her water is becoming more acidic, and is veering away from federal standards of between 8.5 and 8.9.

"Her pH is anomalous around here," said EPA's Michael Towle. "Never around here have I seen one as low as this. At 4.2, this is really low."

Hart has been contracted by Nassau Metals, a subsidiary of American Telephone and Telegraph. In the early part of this decade, Nassau delivered cables to C&D that were burned to reclaim lead and various elements.

Tests, however, showed that dangerous concentrations of lead were present in area wells. EPA deemed C&D a Superfund site, and has labelled Nassau the responsible party for the RIFS.

The representatives were at Mrs. Sulima's home because she asked those in charge of the investigation to conduct another set of tests on her wells. Anne said Monday's round of testing will be to detect what elements are present in Mrs. Sulima's water, including various metals and other dangerous substances.

He added that the tests results could take as long as six to eight weeks to process, and said there is "a ream-and-a-half of paperwork" to be done in connection with the tests.

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